

ic      FRANCO-GERMAN RELATIONS 1871-  
1914

not want war and could not wage it      If  
Germany invaded  
French territory, he added, she would  
withdraw her troops  
without fighting.

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O- May 5 the French Foreign Minister  
received      a      fresh  
s-ock when Hohenlohe informed him of a  
despatch      just  
Deceived from the Wilhelmstrasse. The German  
Government,  
it declared, was not entirely convinced of the  
inoffensive  
character of French armaments, and the  
General      Staff      con-  
sidered war as the ultimate object of recent  
military      measures.  
Decazes, fearing that the next step might be a  
demand      for      the  
reduction of the army, informed Blowitz of the  
situation,  
and on May 6 a despatch from its famous Paris  
Correspondent  
entitled " A French Scare " appeared in *The  
Times*,      revealing  
the threats and arguing that Russia alone could  
prevent      a  
conflict. The despatch aroused consternation  
throughout  
Europe; but on the previous day Schuvaloff, the  
Russian  
Ambassador in London, had passed through  
Berlin      and      ex-  
plained to the Emperor and Bismarck his  
master's      attitude.  
On May 7 William I expressed a wish in writing  
that      the  
offending German editors should be reproved  
for      alarming  
Europe and destroying the gradual growth of  
confidence      that  
peace would not be disturbed. Lord Derby  
instructed      the  
British Ambassador at Berlin energetically to  
support      Russian  
representations, and Andrassy, the Austro-  
Hungarian      Foreign  
Minister, assured Russia of the approval of  
Austria.      Annoyed  
at what he called British credulity Bismarck  
informed      the  
British Ambassador that the project of a German  
attack      was      a  
legend ; and when the Tsar and Gortchakoff  
reached      Berlin      on  
May ii they were met with peaceful  
assurances.      The      six  
weeks' crisis was over. The French President  
wrote      to      thank  
•the Tsar for his timely aid, and Decazes spoke

cheerfully of the  
resurrection of Europe.

That a preventive war was advocated by the  
army chiefs in  
Germany, and that cool observers like Lord  
Derby and Odo  
Russell believed in the danger, is beyond  
dispute; but we  
cannot be certain what was in Bismarck's mind.  
The Tsar  
believed that he invented the danger of a  
French attack in  
order to demonstrate the need of keeping him  
at the helm.  
The statement in his *^flections and Recollections*  
that "the  
myth of a German attack" was a conspiracy  
against him  
engineered by Gontaut-Biron is ridiculous, but  
there is no  
ground for the belief that he had resolved to fight  
and was only  
restrained by the veto of Russia. If he had really  
desired to go